

Classis Central Plains

Agenda

Second CRC Pella

Saturday, Feb. 9, 2019 – 8AM

1. Opening Devotions
2. Roll Call/Constituting Classis
3. Continuing Business
 - a. 2019 Classis Budget (p. 3-4)
4. New Business
 - a. Overture from Peoria CRC (p. 5)
 - b. CO Art. 13.c Loan Renewal for Rev. Don Ridder (p. 6-7)
5. Reports
 - a. Classical committees
 - i. Classical Interim Committee (p. 7-8)
 - ii. Classical Missions Committee (p. 8)
 - iii. Diaconal Committee
 - iv. Classical Ministry Leadership Team (Student Fund)
 - v. Church Health Committee (p. 9)
 - vi. Finance Committee (p. 10-11)
 - vii. Nominating Committee
 - b. Classical Functionaries
 - i. Treasurer
 - ii. Stated Clerk (p. 11-12)
 - iii. Mentors
 1. Rev. Sheldon Starkenburg for Aaron Gunsaulus
 - iv. Church visitors
 1. Team 1: Rev. George DenOudsten, Mr. Steve Vermeer
 - a. Chinese Church of Iowa City, Faith, First Osky, Good News Chapel, New Life
 2. Team 2: Rev. Rich Loerop, Pastor Aaron Gunsaulus
 - a. Bethel Osky, Crossroads Fellowship, First Pella, Prairie City, Trinity St. Louis
 3. Team 3: Mr. Mike Rye, Rev. Mark Jicinsky
 - a. Calvary, Grace Fellowship, Newton, Peoria, Sully
 4. Team 4: Rev. Brad Bierma, Mr. Stan Laverman
 - a. Cedar, Leighton, Peace, Second Pella, Tracy
 - v. Church Counselors
 1. Rev. Matthew McClure for Grace Fellowship (p. 12)
 2. Rev. Mark Jicinsky for Cedar
 - vi. Regional Pastors (p. 12-13)
 - c. Denominational Boards
 - i. Calvin College (p. 13-15)
6. Speakers
 - a. Rev. Rick Admiraal – New Life Prison Church

- b. Tim Franje – “One to One Bible Reading”
- c. Dr. Wayne Kobes - Dordt College
- d. Rev. Kevin Vryhof – Crossroads Fellowship and Liberian Ministry

Proposed FY2019 Budget

	FY2018 Budget	FY2019 Request	FY2019 Budget
Disbursements			
Student Fund	\$20,000.00	\$16,500.00	\$14,000.00
Home Missions			
Committee Expense	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500
Geneva Campus Ministries	\$20,800	\$21,300	\$21,300
Areopagus Ministries	\$10,000	\$10,500	\$10,500
New Life Prison	\$18,000	\$17,000	\$17,000
New Church Plant	\$9,000	\$9,000	\$6,500
Total	\$59,300	\$59,300	\$56,800
Dordt College	\$111,700	\$170,036	\$89,000
Diaconal			
Expenses & projects	\$4,000	\$2,500	\$2,500
Classis Expense			
Travel Expense	\$5,300	\$4,000	\$4,000
Classis Meals	\$1,100	\$1,100	\$1,100
Printing, Postage	\$500	\$500	\$50
Treasurer Bond	\$100	\$100	\$100
Conferences	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$1,750
Clerk	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
Treasurer	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
Total	\$15,000	\$13,700	\$13,000
	\$210,000.00	\$262,036	\$175,300

	Membership	Ministry Share	Pledge
Cedar	28	2898	1456.00
Peace	115	11902.5	4042.00
Leighton*	43	4450.5	0
Newton	84	8694	1600.00
North Liberty	33	3415.5	<u>1500.00</u>
Bethel	105	10867.5	6000.00
First - Osby	270	27945	24720.00
Calvary*	461	47713.5	29137.00
Faith	272	28152	28152.00
First - Pella*	122	12627	5000.00
Grace Fellowship*	34	3515.6	5625.00
Second	178	18423	9214.17
Peoria	144	14904	14904.00
Prairie City*	80	8280	<u>2000.00</u>
Trinity - St. Louis	59	6106.5	1000.00
Sully	262	27117	27117.00
Tracy	50	5175	5000.00
Crossroads*	147	15214.5	8368.00
Total	2487	257401.1	174835.17
* membership number from 2018 CRC Yearbook			<u><i>FY2018 pledge</i></u>

Overture from Peoria CRC

Overture re: Synod Review Task Force recommendation 20

I. Background:

The Synodical Review Task Force recommendation 20 suggests "That synod encourage diversity in classical delegations to synod, as previously approved by synod, and require each classis to include at least one woman or one ethnic minority person in its delegation of one minister, one elder, one deacon, and one other officebearer to synod."

Note the word "require" and compare this to the Acts of Synod 2000, p. 694, Recommendation 2 as adopted: *"although there are within the denomination firmly held differences on the issue of ordaining women to the offices of elder, minister, and evangelist* these differences do not separate us from Christ, nor are they of such an essential nature that they warrant division within the church. Therefore, it is our responsibility to seek earnestly to live together in unity and to minister together for the glory of God."* (*now commissioned pastor)

Grounds:

- a) *The Lord of the church and his apostles call us to live in unity (John 17; Eph. 4:1-3).*
- b) *In spite of different conclusions, all have drawn their arguments from Scripture and are together in desiring to honor Christ as Head of the church.*
- c) *As a denomination we have a rich heritage together and have been led into many important ministries.*
- d) *Living and serving together in love will be a blessing to us and our children, a witness to other churches and the world, and God glorifying.*

II. Overture

With this in mind, the Council of Peoria CRC overtures Classis Central Plains to bring an overture to Synod 2019 rejecting the Synod Review Task Force recommendation 20.

Grounds:

1. It is the prerogative of local congregations and classes to delegate those people they deem scripturally qualified, capable, and willing to go. (See Church Order Art. 3 and supplements; Supplement, Art. 40-a, point b; and Supplement, Art. 45, point b.1)
2. Mandates requiring certain diversity in makeup are arbitrary and unhelpful. Delegates will naturally reflect the makeup of the respective churches, and in many of our congregations, our current delegates faithfully reflect that makeup. The ethnically diverse delegate may be left wondering if they have been delegated because they are viewed as capable (which they may certainly be) or because they are needed as a "token" ethnic delegate and happen to be willing.
3. This requirement impinges on the consciences of members of our denomination. To require that delegates to synod have gender diversity overrides the classical-local option approved in 1995. Congregations and classes which see fit to ordain women are free to delegate them. At the same time, congregations and classes which understand that women serving as elders and pastors to be in violation of the Word of God naturally will not have women to delegate as they are not serving in those offices. (see Acts of Synod 2000, p. 694, Recommendation 2 as adopted)
4. The second ground of the SRTF recommendation states "This practice would eventually eliminate the need for nonvoting advisers." While this would be a way to cut costs, we need to remember that advisers are a good thing, not to be regarded as something to be eliminated. Synod will never be a completely representative body and should continue to engage advisers as a necessary, worthwhile cost. Proverbs 15:22 "Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed."

Approved in council on December 10, 2018
 Peoria Christian Reformed Church, Pella, Iowa
 Daryl Bouwkamp, Council President
 Tim Franje, Council Clerk

CO Art. 13.c Loan Renewal for Rev. Don Ridder

In Feb. 2017 Classis Central Plains approved with the concurrence of synodical deputies for the loaning of Rev. Don Ridder to Escazu Christian Fellowship, San Jose, Costa Rica under CO Art. 13.c

Church Order Article 13c. Supplement states that *“the loaning of such ministerial services may be for a period of time not to exceed two years. Extension of not more than two years each may be granted if circumstances warrant, with the approval of classis and the synodical deputies.”*

Request for Loan Renewal from Grace Fellowship:

Dec. 21, 2018

To Whom It May Concern,

The elders of Grace Fellowship CRC on September 10, 2018, gave their approval to the two-year renewal for Pastor Don Ridder to have Grace remain as the "calling church" for his continued service in Costa Rica. I believe this renewal or extension begins in February of 2019. Based on communications from Pastor Ridder and from the church he is serving, we believe that the Lord's work is being faithfully accomplished in that part of God's Kingdom.

In Christ,

Larry Eggink

Council President, Grace Fellowship

Pella, IA

Request for Loan Renewal from Escazu Christian Fellowship

December 26, 2018

Grace Fellowship Christian Reformed Church and Classis Central Plains

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Escazú Christian Fellowship would like to request a second two-year relationship with Pastor Don Ridder.

Donald Ridder has continued to bless Escazú Christian Fellowship with his service to us over this last year. It has been two years now since he became our pastor, and he is fully functioning in the many roles a pastor of a small church must fill.

The ECF Mission Statement is that we will be the Hand, Heart and Voice of Jesus Christ in the English speaking community in San Jose, Costa Rica. Don Ridder daily exemplifies this mission. One recent example is how he has reached out to US military veteran groups in Costa Rica. He consistently shows interest in their activities and has reflected God's love for them. His ministry has drawn them closer to our fellowship and the Lord. He is a Godly counselor to those in the fellowship who are lonely, or suffering, or going through a crisis in their lives.

Pastor Don Ridder has regularly attended and supported lay-led bible studies, lending his guidance and Biblical knowledge while encouraging other group members to grow in their ability to lead a Bible or Christian book study and share their experiences and testimonies.

After helping ECF to align our traditional giving pattern to the church mission and Budget, Don has been instrumental in invigorating our relationship with the groups that we support with our tithes, gifts, and physical presence.

As an international church, ECF says goodbye to many people who move away for work reasons but thanks to Don's warmth and leadership, ECF has welcomed just as many new arrivals that have stayed faithful to the fellowship.

We would like to continue to be in communication with you with regard to Don Ridder's life and doctrine. We thank you for allowing us to have his pastoral leadership.

Sincerely,

Amelia Swartzbaugh

President of the Council

Escazú Christian Fellowship

San Jose, Costa Rica

Classical Interim Committee

1. Received an overture from Peoria CRC regarding the SRTF recommendation 20. Decided to forward the overture on the churches for February Classis Meeting.
2. Classis Budget Process Review - Art. 7313 of the Classis February 2015 Meeting Minutes states that Classis will review the Classis budgeting process at the Spring 2019 meeting.
 - a. CIC proposes a Budget Process Review Team and will submit names of team members at the February Meeting
 - b. CIC proposes the following mandate:
 - i. Review the current budget procedure, simplify the document while examining these questions:

1. Has the change in Classis budget procedure made our income and spending more aligned?
2. Is the pledge system working to provide adequate resources for Classis ministries?
3. Are there changes or adaptations to be made to address continuing decline in pledged amounts?
4. Any suggestions for further improvement?
 - ii. Team will bring report to May 2019 Classis meeting.
3. Approved of using funds of up to \$1000 for a team to attend a March 2019 gathering in Des Moines
 - a. Team is Gary Brouwers, Aaron Gunsaulus, Mark Jicinsky, Brad Meinders, and Jonathan Spronk
4. Approved using funds of \$118 for the Stated Clerk to sign up for a Stated Clerk Resource Page designed and updated by Kathy Smith at Calvin Seminary.

Classical Missions Committee

The Classis Mission Committee met on December 4. In the meeting the committee thanked and celebrated the God glorifying work of Chuck Veldhuizen. He has been a great blessing to the committee and we are confident he will continue to be used by God in mighty ways. The committee has been in discussion on possible opportunities to encourage and equip churches in Classis Central Plains to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ. One such way that we have tried is the opportunity for churches to share what God is doing in and through them to proclaim the Gospel.

The next step we would like to try is a book recommendation and a day to discuss and share ideas on how to implement the material to help grow disciples. The book we would like to try first is “One to One Bible Reading: A Simple Guide for Every Christian” by David Helm. We would invite each church’s leadership to pick up this book and read it with us and then on March 2 at 9am we will gather together to talk about the material and how to implement it.

The CMC has also continued to be in conversation with Alex Agbuya but has found road blocks as he has had a number of issues that have called him back to the Philippines. The CMC has also been contacted by Brandon Wilson who is with the Navigators and plans to be starting the Navigators Program in Connecticut. We are praying for God’s provision and seek to help network Brandon with churches who are interested and called to support this ministry.

Church Health Committee

Two years ago, the churches of Classis Central Plains committed to a common goal, to grow in health to the point where we are regularly seeing people giving their lives to Jesus. Since then, the Church Health Team has been working to define what healthy churches and leaders look like.

Now, we are beginning to work on understanding the scope of a classis ministry plan in response to a request from Synod 2018 for each classis to develop a strategy that focuses the work of classis in one common direction.

It's early in the process of creating this plan, but already we have discussed a possible structure, where every entity in classis operates from a common set of values toward a common goal. That common set of values could include our definitions of healthy churches and pastors, and our common goal could be the regular celebration of people finding new life in Christ. What would classis look like if each classis ministry were working in this direction, as portrayed in this diagram?

VALUES	CLASSIS MINISTRIES PROMOTING VALUES TOWARD THE GOAL	GOAL
<u>Healthy Leaders</u> <u>Healthy Churches</u>	Interim Committee	Celebrating new lives being found in Christ
	Missions Committee	
	Regional Pastors	
	Church Visitors	
	Training Opportunities	
	Diaconal Fund	
	Student Fund	
	Classis Meeting	

In March, several representatives of classis will be meeting with reps from other classes in our region to continue this conversation and further develop our ministry plan. We look forward to seeing God lead us deeper in participation with the growth of His kingdom.

Finance Committee

Meeting on January 2, 2019

Attendance: Ryan Faber, Ed Dieleman, Ray Pothoven, Calvin Bandstra, Stan Ekdom
Treasurer: Don De Waard

Ryan opened the meeting with prayer.

The Committee reviewed the budget proposal. Per-member revenue resources are declining as the Classis membership declines. This was the first year reflecting the Stephenville CRC transfer out of our Classis, taking 77 members out of the totals. Calculations for this year were based on 2,487 members, and last year's calculations were based on 2,688 members, which is a 7.5% decline. Additionally, some churches are reducing their pledges beyond just membership declines. No pledge numbers have been received yet by North Liberty, Calvary, and Prairie City, with Leighton not making a formal pledge but historically taking up an offering for the Classis ministries.

Based on the pledges given by the individual churches, and the "best guess" on the non-reporting churches, the Committee assumed approximately \$191,000 is available for Classis projects. The proposal sent out to the churches had a proposed budget of around \$262,000, meaning that funding of around \$71,000 needs to be cut. The Committee noted that the smaller causes--the Home Missions projects, the New Church Plant fund, the Student Fund, etc.--are more or less projects that rely heavily on Classis support and have few, if any alternative sources of funding. This leaves Dordt College, with proposed Synod-mandated funding of just over \$170,000, as the main area that could be cut. A motion was made and supported to propose the following budget to Classis:

\$16,500	Student Loan Fund
59,300	Home Missions and New Church Plant Funding
100,000	Dordt College
2,500	Diaconal Fund Expense
13,000	Classis Expenses
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\$191,300	Total Funding

Motion carried unanimously.

Auditing the books was discussed, with Calvin and Ray appointed to do so. Calvin will make arrangements with Don to get the Classis records, and will contact Sheldon about the Diaconal Fund books.

It was agreed that the Pulpit Supply rate remain the same, and that we continue to use the IRS mileage rate.

There being no further business, Don closed in prayer.

Post-meeting actions by Finance Committee:

Following the Finance Committee meeting, pledges and membership numbers came in from the non-reporting churches that did not meet the original budget assumptions. Because of that, a total of \$16,000 in additional cuts need to come from the budget. Email concurrence was given to make the following changes:

\$14,000	Student Loan Fund
56,800	Home Missions and New Church Plant Funding
89,000	Dordt College
2,500	Diaconal Fund Expense
13,000	Classis Expenses
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\$175,300	Total Funding

The component of the Home Missions funding that will be affected will be a reduction in the New Church Plant fund from \$9,000 to \$6,500.

Stated Clerk

One of my duties as stated clerk is to serve as a contact for the denominational historical committee. That committee strongly encourages churches to have their minutes microfilmed and archived in the denominational archives at Heritage Hall at Calvin College in Grand Rapids. Each year I receive a report of the archives' holdings for each church in classis. If you would like to see that list for your church, please let me know. The annual report also requests anniversary booklets (if available) from churches, and indicates which churches are due to send records to the archives. Those requests and churches are:

Have any of the following churches produced an anniversary booklet or historical sketch?

Cedar	75 th
North Liberty, Chinese Church of Iowa City	25 th
Oskaloosa, Bethel	50 th
Pella, Faith	50 th
Pella, First	150 th
Prairie City	100 th
West Des Moines, Crossroads Fellowship	50 th

Records overdue:

Maryland Heights, MO, Trinity
 North Liberty, IA, Chinese Church of Iowa City
 Pella, IA, Calvary
 Pella, IA, First
 Pella, IA, Second
 Prairie City, IA

Sully, IA
Tracy, IA
West Des Moines, Crossroads Fellowship

Counselors' Reports

Rev. Matthew McClure for Grace Fellowship:

Dec. 15, 2018

Grace Fellowship has been blessed by God through the ministry of Pastor Piet Van Waarde, who's final service will be January 6. Through the diligent work of the Grace Fellowship search committee and the congregation they have extended a call to Pastor Chris Allen. By God's good grace he has accepted the call and looks to begin ministry at Grace Fellowship CRC on February 3. As councilor for Grace Fellowship CRC it has been my pleasure to see God work in the life of his people. May God continue to be glorified!

Regional Pastors Report

Classis Central Plains

December 20, 2018

As some of you know, the last two months have been a bit unsettling for me. After noticing that my eye sight was not as it should be, and working on my laptop was becoming more and more difficult, I made an eye appointment in early November and found out that my field of vision had dramatically decreased from my last appointment. An MRI revealed the cause of the loss of eye sight: a golf ball-sized tumor growing at the bottom of the brain. A day spent at University Hospital visiting the ophthalmologists and neuro surgeons and ENT's prepared me for surgery on December 10.

The surgery went well, the tumor was removed, and praise God, my eye sight has started to show improvement. As I have been recuperating at home I have been reflecting on how this role-reversal has affected me. Usually I am the one making the hospital calls or the home visits with those who have been ill, or had surgery, or experienced a loss in their lives. All of a sudden, I'm the one that pastors are coming to visit. I am the one to whom concerned members are bringing meals. I am the one for whom the congregation is raising earnest prayer.

As I think back to the last couple of weeks, I am so grateful for the pastoral care that has been shown to me. Yes, pastors need pastoral care as well, not just in times of illness, but also in order to finish well the work God has called us to do. The plan begins with the pastor himself. Acts 20:28 reminds us that as shepherds we need to watch out for ourselves as well as for our flocks. Steve Johnson, in an article entitled, "Pastoral Care for the Pastor", reminds us that "Every pastor has to realize his own vulnerability. Stress and burnout are not phantom conditions. They are very real risks that come with the rigors of pastoral ministry, and unless

specific disciplines are practiced and preventative safeguards are in place there can be serious consequences for the pastor's health, his family, and his ministry.”

Here are a few suggestions by Johnson that can help a pastor reduce the risk:

- **Spend adequate time alone with the Lord in prayer, meditation, and personal Bible reading** (not just for sermon preparation). It is also helpful to express thoughts, feelings, or prayers in a personal journal.
- **Avoid isolation.** Every pastor needs friends, even within his church, with whom he can have fun and do “guy things.” It is also important to have at least one close friend, within or outside the church, whom he can confide in and with whom he can share his innermost struggles and feelings. This needs to be a person who understands him and who will not judge him, and especially one who will keep private matters confidential.
- **Have a hobby.** Pastors need a “diversion,” an activity that removes their minds and bodies from the pressures of ministry for a time in order to relieve the mental and emotional stress.
- **Manage time well.** Pastors have the luxury of keeping a relatively “fluid” schedule, but they can also put undue pressure on themselves if they aren't disciplined with their time. It becomes necessary to prioritize pastoral responsibilities according to essentials. This helps avoid getting stressed out by trying to accomplish more than time allows. But be certain to reserve adequate and undisturbed hours for study and sermon preparation.
- **Seek counsel if necessary.** If a pastor is suffering from the symptoms of stress, burnout, depression, or other negative conditions, he needs get help, preferably from a qualified Biblical counselor. There is no shame in seeking help (Prov. 24:6). Pride comes before a fall.

Although pastoral care begins with the pastor, the local church, beginning with the elders, needs to recognize their own responsibility in protecting the mental, emotional, and spiritual health of their pastor. Funds should be provided so the pastor can attend continuing education conferences to stretch him and provide refreshment and renewal. The church needs to recognize that their pastor is a gifted individual, but not all pastors have the same gifts. Allow your pastor to develop and use the gifts God has given him, without negative comparisons to other pastors' gifts. And finally, the church should consider providing her pastor(s) a sabbatical that will “disconnect” him for a time from the routine demands of ministry and provide him a time for renewal.

Yes, pastors need pastoral care as well as the members of their congregations. As Regional Pastors, are goal is to see that our pastors that provide so much care for the members of their congregations receive the same blessing.

Sheldon Starkenburg and Gary Brouwers

Regional Pastors, Classis Central Plains

Calvin College Report

Calvin College Board of Trustees

October 24-26, 2018

New trustees to the board arrived on Wednesday, October 24, for new trustee orientation.

Willemina Zwart (London, Ontario, Canada), Lois Miller (Bloomfield Hills, MI), and Andrew

Elliot (Rochester, NY) were introduced to board officers, the trustee committee chair, and members of cabinet at a luncheon at the President's home before they toured each division on campus.

Thursday, October 25 began with trustee participation in individual committee work: investment, trusteeship, audit, executive, academic affairs, administration and finance, advancement, enrollment management, and student life.

The first plenary session on Thursday began after dinner that evening with a trustee development session led by Dr. Michelle Loyd-Paige, executive associate to the president for diversity and inclusion. Each trustee was asked to take an intercultural development inventory prior to the board meeting, and Dr. Loyd-Paige shared the comprehensive results prior to leading a discussion about moving from a monocultural mindset to an intercultural mindset.

Associate Professor of Chemistry Chad Tatko opened the Friday morning meeting with devotions that emphasized the importance of Calvin's mission in building uncommon lives for Christ. He remarked that the board of trustees are his "deep hope" for the future of Calvin's students.

President Le Roy's report noted the effect of demographics on enrollment at Calvin, but he also highlighted what Calvin can do to improve its market share: think expansively, realign net tuition revenue, underscore program differentiation, and continue to focus on student experiences and outcomes. He noted, too, the amazing generosity of Calvin's alumni and friends' donors. Their generosity resulted in a total of \$27.8 million during 2017-2018 for various programs, projects, and endowment funds—\$3.049 million of which was dedicated to the Calvin Annual Fund.

President Le Roy introduced the strategic planning session before turning it over to Todd Hubers, vice president for people, strategy, and technology; Cheryl Brandsen, provost; David Wunder, dean for faculty development; and Sarah Visser, vice president for student life. The team stated the four goals of the developing strategic plan:

- Embody a global and faithful vision of Reformed Christianity
- Expand the influence of Calvin University in the world
- Innovate to reach and engage new learners
- Collaborate across the many domains of learning

The second part of the discussion focused on the strategies needed to achieve the goals and included an exercise led by consultants from DesignVox geared towards trustee group discussion and feedback.

The second plenary included reports from board committees and the following actions:

- Approval of the philosophy of student development
- Approval of tuition, fees, room and board rates for 2019-2020
- Approval of the revised 2018-2019 operating budget
- Approval of the investment policy statement revisions

- Approval of the Prince Conference Center third-party beverage service contractor policy
- Approval of the resolution authorizing amendments to swap agreements on college held debt